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The Confession of Faith of the Second
Congregational Church, Kingston, Mass.

1842

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Washington, Mass. - Second Congregational Church

THE
CONFESSIO **OF FAITH**
AND
COVENANT
OF THE
SECOND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
IN
KINGSTON, MASS.

ORGANIZED MARCH 19, 1828.

PRINTED BY J. L. HOMER,
(At the Office of S. N. Dickinson, 52 Washington Street.)
BOSTON: 1842.

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BRIEF HISTORY
OF THE
FORMATION
OF THE
SECOND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
IN KINGSTON.

DURING the year 1827, several members of the Congregational Church in Kingston became impressed with the importance of forming a new *Evangelical* Church for the purpose of maintaining, in their original soundness, the doctrines of their Puritan fathers, and of sustaining and defending primitive congregationalism; and for this purpose, they requested of the church with which they were connected, letters of dismission, which, not being granted, after renewed applications and the refusal of a mutual council, they united in calling a council themselves, and referred the whole subject to them.

It was not without much prayer, and until repeated efforts had been made to insure the services of an evangelical minister over the church and congregation to which they belonged, but without success, that the organization of a new church was deemed expedient.

The council convened in the academy at Kingston, on Wednesday, March 19, 1828.

Members of the Council: Rev. Samuel Green and Bro. William Ropes, of the Union church in Boston; Rev. Elijah Dexter and Dea. Cephas Bumpus, of the church in Plympton; Rev. Frederic Freeman and Bro. John Harlow, of the Third church in Plymouth. Rev. Mr. Dexter was chosen moderator, and Rev. Mr. Freeman, scribe.

The persons who invited the council having been called on to substantiate the declaration in their letter missive, that they "had endeavored without success to obtain a dismission from

the church with which they were connected, and had offered to refer their request to a mutual council, which proposition had not been regarded," presented testimony sufficient to satisfy the council that they had taken the proper course in this matter: Whereupon it was voted, "That in view of the statements made to this council, it is expedient that the connection of the brethren and sisters respectively, who have petitioned for a dismission from the First Congregational Church in this place, in reference to being organized into a new evangelical church, be dissolved, and that said connection be, and hereby is, ecclesiastically dissolved, according to the Cambridge platform and the usages of the New-England churches."

In addition to the persons thus separated from the church in Kingston, other individuals expressed the desire to be connected with this little company, and on examination of their testimonials of piety were considered by the council as suitably qualified to be admitted as members of the church about to be formed; and it was then voted, that the council proceed to organize the following persons into a church of our Lord Jesus Christ, viz. :

James Cushman,
John Cook,
Tilden Holmes,
Nathaniel Cushman,
Martin Cushman,
George Russell,
Hannah Drew,
Abigail Foster,
Persis Brewster,
Lucy Wadsworth,
Rebecca Cushman,
Sally Cook,
Zilpah Waterman,
Sarah Cobb,
Frances Collier.

It was also voted, that the services take place at 2, P. M., in the Baptist meeting house, which had been kindly offered for the purpose by the members of that society, and that a sermon be preached on the occasion by Rev. Mr. Green, at which time and place the church was organized in due form.

For several months previously to the erection of a house of worship, the church and society were kindly permitted the use of the academy, by its owner, Rev. Martin Parris, who continued, to the close of his useful life, to manifest his friendship for the church in various acts of kindness.

The church were greatly indebted, under God, to Rev. Plummer Chase, for his instrumentality in the organization of the church, and for his services as a preacher for several months.

The following persons have officiated as ministers of the church, viz. :

Rev. John W. Salter, who was ordained April 29, 1829 — dismissed October 13, 1830.

Rev. Josiah W. Powers, installed June 15, 1831 — dismissed February 1834.

Rev. Abraham Jackson, installed Nov. 12, 1834 — dismissed October 1837.

Rev. Erasmus D. Moore, installed May 15, 1839 — dismissed June 15, 1840.

Rev. Henry L. Hammond, ordained as an evangelist, officiated one year.

Rev. Joseph Peckham, present supply ; was ordained as an Evangelist November 30, 1842.

Officers of the Church : Deacons John Cook and Nathaniel Cushman, chosen April 27, 1829.

December 13, 1829 — The church voted, unanimously, to become a temperance church, relinquishing entirely the use of ardent spirit, except as a medicine, and not to receive hereafter to the church any person who continues its use.

January 1, 1838 — Voted, unanimously, that this church withhold fellowship from slave-holding ministers and slave-holding members of churches, on the ground that while the church of Christ continue to fellowship such a system as slavery, the evils connected with it will continue to increase.

By vote of the church, persons wishing to unite with it are to stand propounded at least two weeks previously to their being admitted.

The meeting house in which the church worship, was built by subscription. It is held by a board of trustees for the use of the church. We were indebted to our sister churches in various places for the greater part of the funds necessary to erect the house.

CONFESSION OF FAITH. _

ARTICLE I.

You believe there is one, and but one God, the Creator, Preserver and Governor of the Universe ; a Being self-existent, independent, and unchangeable ; infinite in power, knowledge, wisdom, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.

ARTICLE II.

You believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God ; that they contain a complete and harmonious system of truth ; and that they are a perfect rule of doctrinal belief and religious practice.

ARTICLE III.

You believe that God is revealed in the Scriptures as Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and that these three are one, and equal in divine attributes.

ARTICLE IV.

You believe that God made all things to show forth His own glorious perfections ; that known unto Him are all His works from the beginning ; that He governs all things according to the counsel of His own will ; and that the principles and administration of His government are perfectly holy, just, and good.

ARTICLE V.

You believe that God created man holy, and that he fell from his happy state by sinning against God ; that in consequence of the fall, mankind are by nature destitute of holiness and alienated from God, and so continue until regenerated by the special influence of the Holy Spirit.

ARTICLE VI.

You believe that the Son of God became incarnate, and by his obedience, sufferings, and death, made a full atonement

for sin, and thus opened the way for the salvation of all who believe on Him ; and that such repentance as arises from supreme love to God, and such faith in Jesus Christ as includes an affectionate submission to Him, and reliance upon Him for pardon and eternal life, are the indispensable and only conditions of salvation.

ARTICLE VII.

You believe that the invitations of the Gospel are full and sincere — that all who will may come and partake of the water of life freely ; but that mankind do of their own accord most freely and most wickedly reject the offers of salvation, and will not come to Christ unless drawn by the special influences of the Holy Spirit.

ARTICLE VIII.

You believe the influences of the Holy Spirit are not bestowed on account of any previous merit of the sinner, but as the free gift of God, and that these influences are ordinarily so connected with the careful use of means, as imposes the most solemn obligation to attend upon them, and renders hope of conversion in the neglect of means, or while living in sin, eminently presumptuous.

ARTICLE IX.

You believe that all who obtain salvation through Christ were “ chosen in Him before the foundation of the world,” and that all who truly believe in Him are justified on account of His righteousness, and will be “ kept by the mighty power of God, through faith unto salvation.”

ARTICLE X.

You believe that in this world the Lord Jesus Christ has a visible church — that the terms of membership are a creditable profession of faith in Christ, and of that holiness which is wrought by the renewing grace of God ; and that habitual communion with God, and conscientious attendance upon public, family, and secret worship, and the habitual practice of righteousness, temperance, sobriety, sincerity, and truth, are essential to christian character.

ARTICLE XI.

You believe that the sacraments of the New Testament are baptism and the Lord's Supper: baptism to be administered

only to covenanting believers and their households, and the supper only to believers in regular standing and communion with the church.

ARTICLE XII.

Finally, you believe that at death, the souls of believers being made perfectly holy, do immediately pass into glory; and that the souls of the wicked do, at death, pass immediately to a state of punishment. That at the end of the world, there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust, when all mankind will appear before the judgment seat of Christ, and be judged according to their conduct; and the righteous, publicly acquitted, will enter into life eternal; and the wicked, publicly condemned, will go away into punishment that will never end.

FORM OF ADMISSION.

You present yourselves in this public manner before God, to dedicate yourselves to his service, and to incorporate yourselves with his visible people; you are about to profess supreme love to him, sincere contrition for all your sins, and faith unfeigned in the Lord Jesus Christ, to enter into a solemn covenant to receive the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as they are offered in the Gospel, and to walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. We trust you have well considered the nature of these engagements and professions. The transaction is solemn, and will be attended with eternal consequences. God and holy angels are witnesses. Your vows will be recorded in heaven, to be exhibited on your trial at the last day. Yet be not overwhelmed. In the name of Christ you may come boldly to the God of grace, and provided only you have sincere desire to be his, may venture thus unalterably to commit yourselves, and trust in Him for strength to perform your vows. Attend now to the

COVENANT.

In the presence of God, his holy angels, and this assembly, you do now solemnly dedicate yourselves to God the Father as your chief good, to the Son of God as your Mediator and Head, humbly relying on Him as your Prophet, Priest, and

King ; and to the Holy Spirit as your Sanctifier, Comforter, and Guide. To this one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, you do heartily give up yourselves in an everlasting covenant, to love and obey Him. Having subscribed the articles of Faith and Government adopted by this Church, you promise to walk with us in conformity to them, in submission to all the orders of the Gospel, and in attendance on all its ordinances ; and that by the aids of the Divine Spirit, you will adorn your profession by a holy and blameless life —

Thus you severally profess and engage.

In consequence of these professions and promises, we [here the church rise] affectionately receive you as members of this church, and in the name of Christ declare you entitled to all its visible privileges. We welcome you to this fellowship with us in the blessings of the gospel, and on our part engage to watch over you and seek your edification as long as you shall continue among us : should you have occasion to remove, it will be your duty to seek and ours to grant a recommendation to another church ; for hereafter you can never withdraw from the watch and communion of the saints without a breach of covenant. And now, beloved in the Lord, let it be impressed upon your minds that you have entered into solemn circumstances, from which you can never escape. Wherever you go, these vows will be upon you ; they will follow you to the bar of God, and in whatever world you may be fixed, will abide upon you to eternity. You can never again be as you have been ; you have unalterably surrendered yourselves, and henceforth you must be the servants of God. Hereafter the eyes of the world will be upon you, and as you demean yourselves so religion will be honored or disgraced. If you walk worthy of your profession, you will be a credit and a comfort to us ; but if it be otherwise, you will be to us a grief of heart and a vexation. And if there be a wo pronounced on him who offends one of Christ's little ones ; wo, wo, to the person who offends a whole church !

But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak. May the Lord preserve and guide you till death, and at last receive you and us to that blessed world, where our love and joy shall be forever perfect. Amen.

NAMES OF MEMBERS.

(*) *Deceased*: (†) *Dismissed*: (E) *Excommunicated*.

At the organization of the church.

- * James Cushman,
John Cook,
- * Tilden Holmes,
Nathaniel Cushman,
- † George Russell,
- * Hannah Drew,
Persis Brewster,
Rebecca Cushman,
Zilpah Waterman,
- † Frances Collier,
Abigail Foster,
Lucy Wadsworth,
Sally Cook,
Sarah Cobb,
- † Martin Cushman.

April 6, 1828.

- * Hannah Waterman,
Eveline B. Waterman,
Eunice Holmes,
- * Sarah Sampson,
- * Sylvia Drew,
- * Abigail Drew.

June 1, 1828.

- Levi Waterman,
Debby Brewster,
- E Hannah Brewster.

June 16, 1829.

Mary Covell.

July 5, 1829.

Nathaniel Faunce,
Marcia Faunce.

August 2, 1829.

- † Lydia Washburn,
Lydia Randall,
Priscilla Lucas.

January 1, 1832.

- Sally Mitchell,
- † Elizabeth F. Churchill.

May 6, 1832.

Ebenezer Covell.

September 2, 1832.

Elizabeth B. Waterman,
Zilpah Waterman.

December 6, 1835.

Nathan Lucas,
Mary Cushman,
Sarah Bartlett.

March 6, 1836.

Charles Burgess,
Anne Burgess,
Nancy Russell.

April 17, 1836.

Betsey P. Drew.

June 6, 1836.

- † Sarah L. Russell.

July 1, 1836.

Horatio Washburn.

August 21, 1836.

Samuel Bryant.

November 6, 1836.

Lucy Drew.

March 5, 1837.

- † Foster Perkins.

September 30, 1839.

- † Harriet I. Moore.

February 2, 1840.

Jane Russell.

January 2, 1842.

Mercy F. Sever,
Christiana Bailey,
Sarah T. Willis,
Catharine Russell,
Rebecca Holmes.

February 6, 1842.

Cephas Wadsworth.

February 20, 1842.

Julia Parris.

March 6, 1842.

Lucy Fuller,
Polly Cobb.
Nathaniel Foster,
George H. Cushman,
Julia Russell,
Roxellana Lucas,
Mehetabel C. Cushman,
Seth Washburn,
Jason Bradford,
Joseph Adams,
Phebe Bradford,
Abigail H. Adams,
Ellen Adams,
Sarah A. Washburn,
Judith A. Washburn.

April 3, 1842.

Sarah D. Davie,
Eunice Maria Pope,
Sarah Bryant,
Christiana W. Bailey,
Seth W. Faunce,
James Washburn,
Nahum Bailey, Jr.
Warren N. Everson,
Amelia Russell,

Marcia W. Faunce,
Elizabeth Brewster,
Mary W. Drew,
Elijah Faunce,
Nathaniel Faunce, Jr.
John Q. A. Faunce.

June 5, 1842.

Sarah Holmes,
Thomas Lanman,
Mary Holmes,
Joseph A. Stranger.

July 3, 1842.

Lucy D. Waterman,
Abigail Mitchell,
Sophia Lanman,
Martha D. French,
Cephas Waterman.

September 4, 1842.

Maria Fuller,
Emily Bradford,
Harriet M. Stranger,
Lydia S. Bradford,
Lucy H. Bradford.

December 4, 1842.

Betsey Stranger.

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